

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 03226 01 OF 03 202337Z
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O R 202255Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7207
INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 BRASILIA 3226

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TAGS PGOV BR US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT--IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT-TO-
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

REF: A. BRASILIA 2765; B. BRASILIA 2852 (NOTAL)

1. THE EMBASSY HAS REPORTED ON REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT AS INTERPRETED IN THE MEDIA (REFTEL A) AND ON FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO COMPLEMENT THE VISIT (REFTEL B). THE FIRST PART OF THE LATTER MESSAGE CONSISTED OF AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPAL SUBSTANTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE VISIT (THE PRESIDENT'S BILATERALS WITH GEISEL, THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH SILVEIRA, AND THE JOINT PRESS COMMUNIQUE). IT CONCLUDED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS RESTORED A TONE OF CORDIALITY AND COOPERATIVENESS TO US-BRAZIL RELATIONS, BUT THAT BRAZIL WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK TO BLANCE ITS RELATIONS WITH US BY EXPANDING ITS TIES TO WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND JAPAN, AND BY MAINTAINING ITS POSTURE OF TACTICAL SOLIDARITY WITH THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES OR CAUSES.

2. THIS MESSAGE BRIEFLY REVIEWS WHAT WE BELIEVE TO HAVE BEEN THE PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE VISIT WITH REGARD TO USG-GOB RELATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF REACTION WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM A VARIETY
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SECRET

PAGE 02 BRASIL 03226 01 OF 03 202337Z

OF SOURCES OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS. THE GENERAL IMPORT OF THIS REACTI
ON
SUPPORTS OUR CONCLUSION THAT THE MAJOR ACHIEFEMENT OF THE VISIT WAS A CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE OF OUR RELATIONS FLOWING

FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AMICABLE AND USEFUL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS. THIS CONCLUSION IS SHARED, AMONG MANY OTHERS, BY SENIOR OFFICIALS--BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY-- WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT.

3. GEISEL RESPONDED WARMLY TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S FRIENDLINESS AND COURTESY; WAS IMPRESSED BY THE MANNER IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT HANDLED THE SENSITIVE POINTS IN OUR RELATIONSHIP; AND WAS FLATTERED AND PLEASED BY THE WAY IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT STRESSED BRAAZIL'S IMPORTANT ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND TOOK HIM INTO HIS CONFIDENCE ON WORLD PROBLEMS. IF THE NON-CONFRONTATIONAL TONE SET BY THE PRESIDENT PERSISTS, THE NEW RELATIONSHIP HE HAS ESTABLISHED WITH GEISEL WILL PERMIT A CONTINUING PERSONAL DIALOGUE ON ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST AND WILL FACILITATE EFFORTS TO SEEK MAXIMUM AREAS OF CONVERGENCE. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, GEISEL WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO REMAIN ON HIS GUARD, AS HE DID GENERALLY DURING THE VISIT , ON MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE--PARTICULARLY INCLUDING THE PRINCIPAL ISSUES OUTSTANDING BETWEEN US, I.E., IN THE NUCLEAR, HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE AREAS. GEISEL HAS A CLEAR PERCEPTION OF WHAT HE THINKS BRAZIL'S INTERESTS ARE AND A KEEN SENSE OF THE LIMITATIONS ON THE INFLUENCE AND RESOURCES THAT HE BELIEVES BRAZIL CAN BRING TO BEAR IN PURSUIT OF THESE INTERESTS.

4. AN IMPORTANT BY-PRODUCT OF THIS NEW RELATIONSHIP WAS THE PARALLEL ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INCIPENT RELATIONSHIP WITH GEISEL'S SUCCESSOR, GENERAL JOAO BAPTISTA FIGUEIREDO. BARRING SOME UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT, FIGUEIREDO WILL BE PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL FROM MARCH SECRET

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 03226 01 OF 03 202337Z

1979 TO MARCH 1985. HE HAS REPORTEDLY TOLD SOME OF HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATES THAT HE WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY AND BELIEVES HE CAN "DO BUSINESS" WITH PRESIDENT CARTER (SEE USDAO/IR 6 809 0197 78). FIGUEIREDO'S POSITIVE REACTION HAS IMMEDIATE, AS WELL AS LONG-TERM, POLICY IMPLICATIONS: SINCE HIS "NOMINATION" AS ARENA'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON APRIL 8, HE HAS OFFICIALLY AND MORE OPENLY BECOME A KEY ELEMENT IN THE GOB'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. HIS PRINCIPAL INTEREST, IN BOTH INTERNAL AND FOREIGN POLICY, IS IN LAYING THE BEST POSSIBLE GROUNDWORK FOR THE SUCCESSFUL INITIATION OF HIS OWN ADMINISTRATION. HE WILL, IN THIS SENSE, BE "DOING BUSINESS" WITH PRESIDENT CARTER INDIRECTLY FROM NOW ON, ALTHOUGH ALL POLICY DECISIONS WILL ULTIMATELY REMAIN VERY MUCH IN GEISEL'S HANDS UNTIL FIGUEIREDO ASSUMES OFFICE NEXT MARCH 15.

5. A SUBSIDIARY BUT ALSO IMPORTANT ATMOSPHERIC BY-PRODUCT OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT FLOWED FROM AN UNANTICIPATED PERSONAL TOUCH:

THE PRESIDENT'S GESTURE UPON HIS DEPARTURE FROM BRASILIA OF
HANDING SILVEIRA A PERSONAL NOTE FOR HIS AILING AND ABSENT WIFE
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PAGE 01 BRASIL 03226 02 OF 03 202356Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 HA-05 EB-08 H-01 INR-10
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INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 BRASILIA 3226

DISARMED" SILVEIRA, ACCORDING TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ASSOCIATES.
WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY CONSEQUENT IMPROVEMENT IN SILVEIRA'S
PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PRESIDENT TO TRANSLATE INTO
IMMEDIATELY

VISIBLE CONCRETE RESULTS. IT WOULD WELL HAVE THE EFFECT, HOWEVER,
OF TAKING THE EDGE OFF OF THE DEFENSIVENESS THAT HAS
COLORED SILVEIRA'S PERCEPTION OF THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES AND RENDER
HIM SOMEWHAT MORE RECEPTIVE TO US PROPOSALS IN AREAS IN WHICH HE
DOES NOT BELIEVE BASIC BRAZILIAN INTERETS AND POLICIES ARE AFFECTED.
(IN THIS CONTEXT, OUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SINCE
THE VISIT HAS ATTESTED TO A MORE COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD
US PROPOSALS, ALTHOUGH WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE, AS STATED REFTEL
B, THAT SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE IN BRAZILIAN POLICIES IN MANY AREAS
WILL, AT BEST, BE SLOW.)

6. ONE CENTRAL ASPECT OF THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE ATMOSPHERE DESERVES
MENTION: CREDIT FOR IT IS UNIVERSALLY ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT
CARTER. BOTH PUBLICLY (AS REFLECTED IN BRASILIA 2765) AND IN
PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH NEWSMEN, POLITICIANS, GOB OFFICIALS AND
MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY, PRESIDENT CARTER IS PERCEIVED
AS HAVING TAKEN THE INITIATIVE TO REPAIR A RELATIONSHIP THAT HAD
RECENTLY UNDERGONE A SERIOUS TRIAT. (AT LEAST TWO FOREIGN MINISTRY
OFFICIALS THOUGHT THE GOB'S DEFENSIVE PASSIVITY WAS SOMEWHAT
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PAGE 02 BRASIL 03226 02 OF 03 202356Z

UNGRACIOUS--REMARKING SPECIFICALLY THAT PRESIDENT GEISEL'S WELCOMING STATEMENT COULD HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT WARMER, OPARTICULARLY SINCE HE HAD BEEN GIVEN AN ADVANCE SEMI-FINAL TEXT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S ARRIVAL STATEMENT, WHICH AT LEAST SILVEIRA FOUND HIGHLY SATISFYING.) HOWEVER, WHILE THE CLIMATE OF OUR RELATIONS HAS UNDOUBTEDLY IMPROVED, WE BELIEVE THAT OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS NOT DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE VISIT CONTRIBUTED TO THAT IMPROVEMENT. A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF THESE FACTORS IS IN PARA GRAPH 12 BELOW.

7. THE SECOND PRINCIPAL ACHIEVEMENT OF THE VISIT WASS REFLECTED IN THE COMMUNIQUE: AGREEMENT BY THE TWO PRESIDENTS (A) TO INITIATE OR EXPAND HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ON ISSUES CONCERNING AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND US NON-PROLIFERATION LEGISLATION AS IT AFFECTS BRAZIL; AND (B) TO BROADEN THE SCOPE OF OUR ANNUAL PRE-UNGA CONSULTATIONS AND TO EXPAND OUR CONSULTATIONS UNDER THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING. IN ADDITION, OF COURSE, THERE WAS AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS OF COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND NON-NUCLEAR ENERGY. (DISCUSSION AND RECOMMEND-
ATIONS CONCERNING THESE INITIATIVES IS IN BRASILIA 2852.) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVES IS LIKELY TO GENERATE MOMENTUM TOWARD AGREEMENT IN ASSOCIATED OR OTHER AREAS OF COOPEATION; IN ADDITION TO THE FOLLOW-ON PROPOSALS SUGGESTED IN BRASILIA 2852, WE--AND WE HOPE THE GOB AS WELL--WILL BE ALERT TO OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP AND PURSUE OTHER COURSES OF ACTION THAT MAY SUGGEST THEMSELVES.

8. SOME MOMENTUM MAY ALREADY BE GENERATING; VARIOUS AGENCIES OF THE GOB HAVE BEEN VERY RCEPTIVE TO FOLLOW-ON CONVERSATIONS AND IN SOME AREAS ARE APPARENTLY CONSIDERING INITIATIVES OF THEIR OWN. ONE EXAMPLE OF THE LATTER APPEARS TO BE IN THE AREA OF PRE-UNGA CONSULTATIONS--THE HEAD OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S UN DIVISION INDICATED LATE LAST WEEK THATHE IS CONSIDERING WHETHER THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO HIS DEPARTMENT WILL PERMIT HIM TO SUGGEST THAT THIS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BRASIL 03226 02 OF 03 202356Z

YEAR'S TALKS TAKE PLACE IN WASHINGTON, AND THAT THEY ALTERNATE BETWEEN BRASILIA AND WASHINGTON FROM NOW ON RATHER THAN BE HELD EVERY YEAR IN BRASILIA. HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD LIKE THESE CONSULTATIONS TO APPEAR TO BE "MORE IMPORTANT", I.E., TO TAKE MORE TIME AND TO BE AT THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL.

9. WITH THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT JUST THREE WEEKS BEHIND US WE ARE SILL IN A "SECND HONEYMOON" PERIOD, ALTHOUGH SOME TWINGES OF

APPREHENSION ARE EVEN NOW BEING FELT ON THE BRAZILIAN SIDE--
AND THESE ARE ASSOCIATED AS BEFORE WITH THE KEY OUTSTANDING ISSUES.
UNCERTAINTY AS TO THE MIX OF REASONS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY
TODMAN'S DECISION TO LEAVE INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS HAS LED TO SOME
(STILL INCIPENT) CONCERN AS TO THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN
RIGHTS ISSUE AS IT MAY AFFECT US-BRAZIL RELATIONS. AND RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING OUR NEW NON-PROLIFERATION LEGISLATION,
TOGETHER WITH STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY
NYE TO THE EFFECT THAT THE USG CONTINUES TO HOPE FOR A MODIFICATION
OF BRAZIL'S NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT WITH WEST GERMANY, HAVE
PROMPTED PUBLIC FOREIGN MINISTRY DENIALS WITH THE SAME IMMEDIACY AND
CETERMINATION THAT CHARACTERIZED THEM BEFORE THE VISIT.
10. THE LESSON IS CLEAR--AND SIMPLE. THE GOB WILL CONTINUE TO

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 03226 03 OF 03 210009Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 HA-05 EB-08 H-01 INR-10
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INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
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S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 3 BRASILIA 3226

RESPOND AMICABLY AND COOPERATIVELY TO APPROACHES BY PRESIDENT
CARTER AND HIS REPRESENTATIVES SO LONG AS THEY ARE MADE IN TERMS
CONSISTENT WITH THE PRECEDENT SET BY THE PRESIDENT DURING HIS VISIT.
THE GOB WILL BECOME IMMEDIATELY (AND AUTOMATICALLY) DEFENSIVE ANY
TIME IT BELIEVES IT IS BEING PRESSURED ON THE SUBSTANCE OF ISSUES
IN WHICH IT CONSIDERS ITS BASIC INTERESTS TO BE ENGAGED. WE
BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE NEW ELEMENTS IN OUR RELATIONS
WHICH COULD SERVE, IF NOT NECESSARILY TO OVERCOME, AT LEAST TO
ISOLATE THE HA
D ISSUES AND PERMIT CONTINUED COMMERCE ON THE
BALANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP. THESE ARE: (A) THE EXISTENCE OF A
POSITIVE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS;
(B) THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THEM, AS FORMALIZED IN THE JOINT PRESS
COMMUNIQUE, TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH ON MATTERS OF SPECIAL INTEREST;
AND (C) WHAT WAS IN EFFECT PRESIDENT CARTER'S "VALIDATION" OF

BRAZIL'S INTERNATIONAL STATUS BY HIS REMARKS CONCERNING BRAZIL'S WORLD ROLE AND HIS CONFIDING IN GEISEL ON MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. THESE NEW ELEMENTS PERMIT US TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN BEFORE AS TO THE PROSPECTS FOR SOME PROGRESS--ALBEIT SLOW--IN CERTAIN AREAS OF OUR RELATIONS. WE SHOULD NOT DELUDE OURSELVES, HOWEVER, THAT GEISEL (WHO WILL RETAIN ULTIMATE DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY UNTIL MARCH 1979) WILL CHANGE COURSE ON THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE KEY ISSUES BETWEEN US. AS SILVEIRA IS WONT TO SAY, BRAZIL
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BRASIL 03226 03 OF 03 210009Z

HAS NEITHER PERMANENT FRIENDS NOR PERMANENT ENEMIES--ONLY PERMANENT INTERESTS. THE CONSULATIONS ON THE MTN NEXT MONTH WILL BE THE FIRST IMPORTANT TEST OF WHETHER THE GOB'S MORE COOPERATIVE STANCE CAN BE TRANSLATED INTO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES IN THE NEAR TERM.

11. WHILE THE GOB HAS GIVEN EVIDENCE THAT IT IS PREPARED TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE KIND OF TREATMENT IT RECEIVED FROM THE PRESIDENT, THAT TREATMENT IS NOT THE SOLE DETERMINANT OF THE GOB'S RESPONSE. THE TWO OUTSIDE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 6 ABOVE ARE: (A) FRANK TALK BY THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, AND (B) A WORSENING TRADE ACCOUNT. ACCORDING TO GERMAN EMBASSY SOURCES HERE THE FRG, BOTH BEFORE AND DURING PRESIDENT GEISEL'S VISIT TO BONN MARCH 6-10, EMPHASIZED TO THE GOB THAT GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN BRAZIL AND THE US WERE IMPORTANT TO BONN, I.E., THE BETTER US-BRAZIL RELATIONS, THE BETTER THIS WOULD BE FOR BRAZIL'S GERMAN PARTNER. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, THE GEISEL VISIT WAS INTENDED TO UNDERLINE THE CLOSE TIES BETWEEN BRAZIL AND THE FRG, BUT IT WAS NOT INTENDED TO IMPLY THE EXISTENCE OF A POLITICAL ALLIANCE AGAINST THE US. IMPLICIT IN THIS PRIMARY MESSAGE WAS A SECONDARY ONE--THAT IT WOULD BE TO BRAZIL'S ADVANTAGE TO SEEK TO MEND ITS FENCES WITH WASHINGTON.

12. THE OTHER FACTOR IS BRAZIL'S HEAVY DEPENDENCE ON INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL MARKETS, INCLUDING US BANKS; ON THE GOOD WILL OF THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS COMMUNITIES; AND ON THE CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF THE US AS AN EXPORT MARKET. THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOB, ESPECIALLY ITS INFLUENTIAL FINANCE MINISTER, HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CONSCIOUS OF THIS DEPENDENCE AND, PARTLY FOR THIS REASON, THE ECONOMIC MINISTERS OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ALWAYS EMPHASIZED AMITY AND COOPERATION WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE US, EVEN DURING PERIODS WHEN GENERAL RELATIONS WERE TENSE. THIS DEPENDENCE IS CURRENTLY DRIVEN HOME ONCE AGAIN BY THE DISAPPOINTMENT--
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PAGE 03 BRASIL 03226 03 OF 03 210009Z

INT OUTLOOK FOR BRAZIL'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS. THE RESULT OF DROUGHT AND UNFAVORABLE WORLD MARKET PRICES, THIS SITUATION HAS DASHED EARLIER HOPES OF \$1 BILLION TRADE SURPLUS AND MADE LIKELY A SIGNIFICANT TRADE DEFICIT THIS YEAR.

13. WHILE THE FRG HAS STRESSED THE DESIRABILITY OF GOOD US-BRAZILIAN RELATIONS ON EARLIER OCCASIONS, ITS REITERATION BEFORE AND DURING THE GEISEL VISIT MUST HAVE BEEN SOBERING TO THE GOB, FOR WHICH THE VISIT TO BONN WAS A SYMBOTIC CAPSTONE OF FOUR YEARS OF GEISEL-SILVEIRA EFFORTS TO DIVERSIFY BRAZIL'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS. IT MUST HAVE DRIVEN HOME THE POIN, IF THERE WAS EVER ANY DOUBT IN THE MINDS OF BRAZILIAN POLICY MAKERS, THAT BRAZIL'S INTERESTS ARE NOT SERVED BY TENSE RELATIONS WITH THE US. THUS, THE PRESIDENT'S FRIENDLY, COOPERATIVE APPROACH MAY WELL HAVE COME AT JUST THE RIGH TIME--AT A MOMENT WHEN THE GOB, FOR IMPORTANT REASONS NOT DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE VISIT, ITSELF FELT AN INCREASED EED TO REPAIR ITS RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT APPEARING IN ANY WAY TO BE THE SUPPLICANT. TO THE EXTENT THAT MAY BE THE CASE, THE IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS MAY AFFECT SUBSTANCE AS WELL AS TONE.

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